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Q00 it a unilateral kin group; the theorists of the clan cited here have equally consistently called it a unilineal kin group. Too much can easily be made of this distinction; however, it serves to reinforce the primary conceptions of the various proponents, and merely indicates that various leading thinkers have pursued their respective positions to remote points of etymology. The point remains, nevertheless, that a sib-member has little cause to reckon kinship lineally, i.e., backward or forward in time; his relationships are with those of his congeners who are his contemporaries, including two or three ascending generations, and the same number of descending generations; possibly, a fourth generation in either direction may be added if one takes in the references of one's father as well, and of one's son. The clan- and lineage-member, however, must reckon far beyond mortal memory and direct reference; he must have recourse to the oral tradition of his people which covers many centuries, for example in determining the eligibility of two people to marry.

A common body of criteria for the clan has been derived from the theories and definitions of Morgan, Lowie, Kirchhoff, Radcliffe-Brown, Murdock, and Fortes.<sup>1</sup> The systems of consanguinity of the Asiatic steppe societies conform to these criteria of the clan, but have their own configurations unique to themselves; certain of the criteria are more important for the understanding of the

<sup>1</sup> [cf. cat. 116, pp. 7-22 -- Analyst]

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kinship systems than others; and among these, the genealogy which serves to constitute the clan as such, and to delineate the unit of exogamy by counting off a segment of itself to make up the prohibited degrees of relationship for marriage, is a central criterion. The clan, with its genealogical orientation, its ranked collateral lineages, its territorial locus, and its generation count in exogamy, is contrasted with the sib on the steppes of Asia. The sib as distinct from the clan is not a widely recognized concept, but has been given adequate theoretical foundation by Lowie and Murdock, and above all, is pragmatically applicable to the analysis of the steppe societies.

The functions of the clan, on the other hand, are not limited exclusively to kinship and consanguinity. These societies have frequently formed vast empires, notably those of Chingis Khan and the Chingisides, Tamurlane, the Golden Horde, as well as monarchies of lesser historical élat. The clan may be likened to the anvil upon which the political being was hammered out; the clan has served as<sup>a</sup> politico-military unit, furnishing companies or regiments of cavalry, collecting taxes through the persons of its noble leaders, and administering the laws and regulations of the monarch. Nevertheless, a principle is to be observed that runs through the length of recorded history, and through all the social unities of steppe society from the humblest to the mightiest: the lowest

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Mongol could claim descent from a common ancestor with his ruler Chingis Khan; the lowliest Kazakh could make a similar claim in regard to his khan, as could a Kalmuk. The steppe society has a structure which may be likened to a set of concentric circles, the widest circle being the whole of Mongol society, the next widest a principality, the next a clan, the next a lineage or set of lineages internally disposed in the same manner, the next the village, and the smallest the extended family.

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The comparison to a set of concentric circles must be qualified, however, because not all Mongols or Kazakh-Kirgis are of equal birth; descent lines are collaterally ranked in terms of the birth-order of the respective founders, and at a certain point in the genealogical history of these lines, the highest ranking lineages have assumed noble status, while the others have remained in the commoner estate. The point in genealogical history when the society was split into two estates may be an event recorded in 'objective' history, such as the establishment of an empire, or a war, etc. In any case, it is an event outside the domain of kinship proper. The siba do not form into a hierarchy of concentric structures; they are more like Kirchhoff's egalitarian clans.

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The sib has had a set of political functions, even though such functions may be less spectacular than those of the clan and of the society with which the clan is

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associated. The sib has served as a unit of administration by outside powers such as the Chinese, who have appointed sib leaders as the rulers of administrative units into which the sibs have been organized. But the sib is not a territorial unit; one's neighbor is not necessarily a fellow sib-mate. Despite the differences in structure and in kinship and political function, the sib of the Asiatic steppe parallels the clan in many respects: kinship is basically agnatic in both; authority is 'transmitted in the line of the eldest sons; if the eldest son's line dies out, it passes to the senior surviving brother; and if there is none such, to the next ranking father's brother, and so forth.

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In regard to pastoral nomadic society of the steppe, the whole is consanguineally related in fact or fiction; however, there is a sharp cleavage between the clan and broader groupings than the clan on the one hand; and between the clan and its component units, such as the lineage, on the other. Only the clan and units larger than the clan, such as the principality, the khanate, etc., are divided into noble and commoner estates; the lineage and the extended family are homogeneously composed of either aristocrats or commoners, but not both. For this reason we may regard the clan not only as having a structure based on consanguinity, but also as a politico-military unit. The politico-military character of the division into estates is ultimately derived from a kinship

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principle; but this is a purely genetic consideration. In actual function, the estates are politically, militarily, and economically distinct divisions. Thus the entire society of the Asiatic steppe is anomalous, for its major units are quasi-political and quasi-consanguineal structures. Because of their consanguineal character, the clan and other major units therefore will be briefly sketched in their specific forms for each of the societies, Buryat, Kalmuk, and so forth. As consanguineal structures, their analysis will afford insight into the kinship relations within smaller units. Nevertheless they cannot be a primary consideration in the analysis of kinship systems because they go beyond this mode of human relationship into the domain of political structure, etc.

#### Village and Family

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The nomadic village on the Asiatic steppe is formed of a cluster of related families who pasture their herds together, camp together, nomadise together, combine for mutual protection and for religious rites. The village is a unit of local government having at its head an elder who, in company with other respected men of the community, guides its affairs and regulates its conduct, movements and relations with other units, larger, smaller, and co-equal. The elder, who is the head of the senior family of the village, together with his compeers, the heads of

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000 unit, without temporal depth, without deep oral tradition, as contrasted with the diachronically oriented social structure of the steppe pastoralists. Different too are the rules of marriage and of inheritance; above all, the genealogical charter, the expression in patrilineal terms of the oral tradition of the society, is missing in the named-sib and the synchronically oriented family.

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( By way of summary, the society of the Asiatic steppe is a system of unilineal descent groups, membership in which is established either by real or fictive attribution of consanguinity, i.e., descent from a common ancestor. Consanguineal kinship in these groups is reckoned exclusively in the male line, and it is reckoned in the form of detailed genealogies, which may be demonstrable but are typically mythical. These units are the clans, composed of lineages. The lineage may be analyzed in terms of three structural principles, that of patrilineal descent, that of differential inheritance, and the dual process of lineage fission and fusion. In consequence of the patrilineal descent pattern, consanguinity is attributed only to agnatic kin; in consequence of the principle of differential inheritance, the component lineages are collaterally ranked within the clan; kinship is fictively attributed to those who join a lineage through the fusion of a remnant lineage to another one.

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Exogamy is practiced within a specified number of

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[797] again; but the second marriage was accompanied by no ceremony.<sup>143</sup> The clergy thus came to play an important role at the beginning of the marriage, for it was they who had to set the auspicious day by astrological calculations; they blessed the marriage during the wedding itself, and presided over its disruption.<sup>144</sup>

#### Kalmuk Society in the 20th Century

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614 From recent reports a clear indication of profound structural changes which Kalmuk society has undergone is manifest. Evidence that the Kalmuks have transformed their society from the former patri-clan system to another may be derived from the studies of Borisov<sup>145</sup> and Aberle.<sup>146</sup> The conception of the clan which most adequately conforms to the practical needs involved in the study of Turko-Mongol society is that advanced by Kirchhoff,<sup>147</sup> who starts with the basic definition of the clan as a unilineal descent group, i.e., tracing descent either in the male or the female line, but not both; and clan membership may be attributed to a person on the basis of bio-

<sup>143</sup>Nebol'sin, op. cit., 113, VI, 105.

<sup>144</sup>de Hell, 259; Bergmann, II, 146; Nebol'sin, op. cit., 113, VI, 94, 105; Nefed'ev, 193.

<sup>145</sup>Borisov, 23.

<sup>146</sup>Aberle, ms.

<sup>147</sup>Kirchhoff, The Principles of Clanship, ms.

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 logically demonstrable birth, or through the application  
 of a socially recognized fiction. Kirchhoff further  
 distinguishes between "equalitarian" clans and clans in  
 which there are differently valued lines of descent; it  
 is to the second type of clan that the Turko-Mongols be-  
 long. The mechanism for the establishment of these dif-  
 ferentiations to the satisfaction of the various clan  
 members has been described at length in the foregoing;<sup>1</sup>  
 the arrangement of ranked collateral lineages based upon  
 the birth order of the founders, in turn based on the  
 principle of primogeniture; the mode of differential in-  
 heritance of the various corporeal and incorporeal as-  
 pects of the patrimony; these are the basic features of  
 the mechanism for differentiation. Upon this mechanism  
 is superimposed a structural device external to the clan,  
 namely, the differentiation into noble and commoner estates  
 which, however, realize in their turn the principle of  
 differential descent and inheritance, this time rendered  
 fixed and impermeable. Nevertheless, throughout the  
 structure of Turko-Mongol society generally, and Kalmuk  
 society specifically, the practice of tracing descent  
 through genealogical reckoning back to a common ancestor,  
 is the basis of affirming all kinship and social relations,  
 the consanguineal as well as the affinal. By reckoning  
 genealogy and degree of kinship relationship, eligibility  
 to marry is determined, obligation for economic, legal,  
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[Cf. Cat. 116, AMI Mongolia, pp. 228-287 -- Analyst]

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military support, pasture rights, camping rights, and so forth. The genealogical principle, and the oral tradition upon which it is founded, is the basis for all social relations in the Turko-Mongol clan.

The concept of the clan as a group based upon the exact reckoning of descent in the form of genealogies (leaving aside the question of "truth" or accuracy of the genealogy) is contrasted with that of the named sib. The distinction upon which this contrast is based derives from a formulation proposed by Lowie: the sib, as he analyzes it, is a unilateral kinship group, i.e., tracing descent from either parent, but not both. The specific principle he brings to bear is the inheritance of a name, e.g., Smith, from either the father in a patri-sib, or the mother in a matri-sib, and this is all that is necessary for admission to membership in the given sib system. 148 Both the genealogical clan and the named sib are exogamic units, either in their totality, or in some operative sub-division of theirs which is based on the same respective principle, e.g., an exogamic lineage in the case of the clan as here defined.

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The Kalmyk social structure as presented in independently corroborative reports for the 20th century departed from the clan principle and conformed to that of the sib.

<sup>148</sup> Lowie, Primitive Society, 111-112. Cf. also Lowie, Family and Sib, 28-40.